



NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WATER POLICY

January 27, 2009 Discussion Draft –Open for Lots of Collaborative Refinement!

- 1) Purpose & need: create an official, representative and public forum for the assessment of water policy options and recommendation of policy and program improvements to supplement the national process for addressing the changing needs and abilities of local, state and national levels of government and to assure that federal efforts are as efficient, balanced and consistent as possible.
- 2) Advisory Committee Chairs: Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water & Science and the & EPA Assistant Administrator for Water
 - a) Each would chair the Advisory Committee for 1 calendar year, so that
 - i) a high level of integration and collaboration would be essential,
 - ii) within each 4-year presidential administration, the mission/priorities of each agency would be assured specific consideration, including (but not limited to):
 - ◆ Water supply
 - ◆ Water quality
 - ◆ Ecosystem restoration
 - ◆ Navigation
 - ◆ Flood protection
 - ◆ Recreation
 - ◆ Irrigation
 - ◆ Hydropower
- 3) Advisory Committee Composition: whatever legal basis is used to establish and direct this Committee should specify a total of 30 members, as follows:
 - a) One representative for each of the 21 principal hydrologic units of the US
 - i) Each of these representatives must have credible experience in at least one of the following water resource specialties:
 - ◆ Integrated water resource management;
 - ◆ Flood hazard assessment and mitigation;
 - ◆ Conjunctive use of surface and ground water;
 - ◆ Water law or related environmental laws;
 - ◆ Water project planning, financing, or operation;
 - ◆ Instream flow protection for ecological or recreation needs;
 - ◆ Water use efficiency (agricultural, municipal & industrial)
 - ii) Each of these representatives may designate and Alternate Representative to serve in their absence, but must have credible experience in one or more of the areas listed above
 - iii) No more than 2/3 of these representatives should be affiliated with either major political party
 - b) Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

- c) Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water & Science
 - d) EPA Assistant Administrator for Water
 - e) One representative (each of which would be required to have credible experience in one or more of the areas listed above) for each of the following
 - i) Council on Environmental Quality
 - ii) Department of Agriculture
 - iii) Department of Commerce
 - iv) Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - v) National Governor's Association
 - vi) National Association of Counties
 - vii) National Conference of Mayors
- 4) Advisory Committee Meetings:
- a) Committee should initiate its own survey of policy issues deserving its attention and investigation and set its own priorities for addressing them;
 - b) Based on Federal Advisory Committee Act (similar to the Administrative Procedures Act, but no right to challenge decisions in court)
 - i) Regular schedule, with plenty of notice to the interested public
 - ii) Access to meeting materials in advance
 - iii) Opportunity for public input and comment before decisions are made
 - iv) Decisions (recommendations) should be developed and adopted in public and should reflect consensus-building, rather than vote-counting, since the Advisory Committee representation gives more emphasis to watersheds than to population, economic or other demographic considerations
 - v) Authority of the Advisory Committee should be limited to making recommendations to the Congress, the President and to federal agency directors)
 - c) Regular meeting schedule for 4-6 meetings/yr (quarterly? every 6-8 weeks? some meetings in DC and some around the country?) so there is time to prepare issues and time for participants to be informed and to consult their experts and constituencies in advance
 - i) Consistency in the relationships among geographic (non-federal) and federal agency representatives,
 - ii) Shared understanding of the needs, opportunities & challenges in each region
 - iii) Evaluation of the science and economic factors underlying the issues and options
 - iv) Open consideration of expert & public input
 - v) Ability to review results, increase probability for implementation